

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 7, 2011

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: ABI LERNER, P.E. DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #3 - PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY 2013-FY 2018 CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ) AND REGIONAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (RSTP) PROJECT FUNDING REQUESTS

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of the FY 2013-FY 2018 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Project funding requests.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission review the candidate list of CMAQ/RSTP projects for FY2013-FY2018 and develop a recommendation which can be forwarded to City Council at their September 27, 2011 meeting for their consideration and approval. This funding plan must be provided to NVTa before September 30, 2011.

**DISCUSSION:** Every year the Commonwealth allocates Federal CMAQ and RSTP money to our region, which the jurisdictions within the NVTa distribute among themselves. These funding allocations typically total approximately \$24 million for CMAQ and \$36 million for RSTP funds. These funds have been allocated since FY 1993 for CMAQ and FY 1994 for RSTP. Alexandria has been the recipient of CMAQ and RSTP funding in recent years, as is shown in the following table:

<u>Fiscal Year (FY)</u>	<u>Alexandria Funding</u>
FY 2008	\$3,520,000
FY 2009	\$3,080,000
FY 2010	\$2,490,000
FY 2011	\$2,500,000
FY2012	\$3,000,000

In March 2011, the Commonwealth requested that Alexandria and all other jurisdictions in northern Virginia provide a six-year plan for FY2012 through FY2018 projects. The Transportation Commission recommended that Council request funding for the proposed

six-year plan from NVTa. This request was forwarded to the NVTa, and the following plan was approved for expenditures in Alexandria from FY2012-FY2018. The approved plan largely reflects what was requested by Council with a few exceptions.

	<b>FY12</b>	<b>FY13</b>	<b>FY14</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>FY16</b>	<b>FY17</b>
Preliminary Engineering of Exclusive Transitway Improvements	\$240,000					
Dash Bus Replacement	\$1,300,000	\$1,950,000	\$2,500,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,100,000	\$2,870,000
Bike Sharing		\$400,000				
Bike Racks on DASH Buses	\$180,000					
Holmes Run Pedestrian/Bicycle Tunnel Construction	\$500,000					
Bike Parking	\$380,000			\$25,000	\$225,000	
Mt Vernon Trail		\$50,000	\$450,000			
Transit Store			\$500,000		\$500,000	
Transit Analysis Study				\$500,000		
TDM	\$400,000	\$700,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$700,000
Braddock Road			\$250,000	\$900,000		
Parking Tech						
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$3,100,000</b>	<b>\$4,200,000</b>	<b>\$3,975,000</b>	<b>\$3,325,000</b>	<b>\$3,570,000</b>

Based on prior year grants, it is not likely that all \$21.17 million in City projects will be funded in FY 2013-FY2018. Therefore it is important to put an aggressive funding request forward to garner as much funding as possible.

CMAQ funds are allocated to regions, like the Washington metropolitan region, throughout the country that are not meeting Clean Air Act regulations. These funds must be used for activities that improve air quality and cannot be used to increase the capacity of roadways. RSTP funds are very flexible funds that can be used for a wide range of regional transportation activities.

This year the City's Transportation Commission was pivotal in developing the recommendations for CMAQ and RSTP funding. One of the Commission's most important duties is to recommend priorities for projects for which the City is requesting grant funding. After employing several criteria, receiving public input, and discussing the projects, the Transportation Commission unanimously approved the projects and priorities outlined below.

The City of Alexandria must submit a funding request for CMAQ and RSTP funds for FY 2013-FY 2018 to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTa) by

September 30, 2011. These projects will be collectively reviewed by jurisdictional staff and a recommended set of projects will be submitted to the NVTB Board for approval. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Commonwealth Transportation Board, which will approve the projects by June 2012.

Below is the recommended funding request for FY 2013-FY 2018 consistent with the priorities of the Transportation Commission.

	<b>FY13</b>	<b>FY14</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>FY16</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY18</b>
DASH Bus Replacement	\$1,950,000	\$2,660,000	\$2,030,000	\$2,080,000	\$2,820,000	\$2,160,000
Bike Sharing	\$400,000	\$100,000	\$110,000	\$120,000	\$260,000	\$270,000
Bike Parking			\$25,000	\$225,000		
Mt Vernon Trail	\$50,000	\$450,000				
Transit Store		\$500,000		\$540,000		\$560,000
Transit Analysis Study			\$500,000			
TDM	\$700,000	\$500,000	\$510,000	\$530,000	\$760,000	\$560,000
Braddock Road			\$600,000	\$550,000		
Parking Tech			\$250,000	\$260,000	\$270,000	\$280,000
Total	\$3,100,000	\$4,210,000	\$4,025,000	\$4,305,000	\$4,110,000	\$3,830,000

Nine projects are proposed for CMAQ or RSTP funding in FY 2013-FY2018. These are briefly described below, in priority order:

1. DASH Bus Replacement

For DASH to maintain its fleet, the fleet must be replaced after their useful life has been reached. In addition, new buses are added to address high demand on existing routes and to serve new transit markets. With the funds available the City should be able to buy three to four buses each year, with FHWA funds.

This program is recommended to be the City's first priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

2. Bicycle Sharing Initiative

Bicycling is a practical, cost-effective and efficient way to move through urban areas. Old Town and the Carlyle/East Eisenhower areas of Alexandria are both compact, dense areas of mixed use development with many low-speed streets and existing on- and off-street bicycle facilities. While the City is making improvements on many fronts to encourage more sustainable transportation choices, one major goal in the City's Transportation Master Plan is to implement a pilot bicycle sharing program. Public bicycle transit (also known as "bike sharing") is a service where public

bicycles are made available for shared use. Users can pick up and drop off bikes at designated stations by either registering online or at a station.

Capital Bikeshare, the bikesharing program in DC and Arlington, is the largest bikesharing program in the United States. When the first stations were put in place in September 2010, officials predicted that 6,000 people would purchase the \$75 annual memberships in the first year. Instead, that target was reached in six months, and then doubled in 24 hours through a half-price promotion. Capital Bikeshare jurisdictions have found bike share to be well used by tourists. In its first seven months, Capital Bikeshare generated 330,000 trips. In DC, revenues have covered operating costs, which exceeded expectations.

Due to the success of the program, in April 2011, Arlington added four stations to their 14 existing stations, and plans to install a total of 30 stations by the end of 2011. DC will add 25 stations this year. Alexandria's projected usage would be similar to Arlington's, however, because Alexandria has a higher bicycle commuting share, nearly twice that of Arlington, and because of the number of tourists visiting the Old Town area, combined with the immediate connectivity to the system in Arlington, Capital Bikeshare may be even more successful in Alexandria.

Previous bike share programs have shown that dense systems work best, and therefore Capital Bikeshare trips are intended to be short. To accommodate this, stations are placed approximately a quarter mile apart and located at major origins and destinations, such as residential areas, commercial centers, and transit stations. Bike share helps solve the "last mile problem" of commuters getting to their destination by co-locating bike share stations with transit.

Funding for the Bicycle Sharing Initiative would extend the proposed Capital Bikeshare pilot network in Old Town and Carlyle. The pilot would be six stations and this funding would expand the pilot to include an additional six locations in the Old Town, Carlyle and Braddock areas. Staff is continuing to identify additional funding sources to expand the program through Transportation Management Plan contributions and grants. The initiative would provide feasibility information necessary to make key recommendations about future development or expansion of the program.

This project is recommended to receive the City's second highest priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

### 3. Bicycle Parking at Major Transit Stops

Bicycle commuting has risen in Alexandria since 2005, in part due to improved on- and off-street connections to the City's bikeway network. However, the City still lags behind other local jurisdictions in providing safe, secure bicycle parking at its major transit stops. To address high demand and current use levels that meet or exceed capacity, the City is seeking funds for modular, enclosed, unattended bicycle parking

“stations” at Metro stops. These stations are designed to provide a low-cost, high-capacity solution that will also encourage short bicycle trips to complement public transit usage. A recent study by WMATA of bicycle parking facilities showed a deficiency in bicycle parking at the King Street and Braddock Road metro stations. The study also showed a need for secure bicycle parking at the King Street Metro Station, where there are incidences of bicycle theft.

This project is recommended to be the City’s third highest priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

4. Rebuilding the Mt. Vernon Multi-Use Trail Parallel to E. Abingdon Drive

Currently, the Mt. Vernon multi-use trail is badly constricted in the section parallel to E. Abingdon Drive, south of Slaters Lane. Methods for widening this portion of the trail will be studied, an alternative chosen, and the path widened. This action will make this important link in the region’s pedestrian-bicycle network safer and better able to handle the amount of traffic on it. This link is a high priority due to large volumes of commuter and recreational users on the Mount Vernon Trail. In July 2011, a pedestrian and bicycle count was conducted near this section of trail for the national bicycle and pedestrian documentation project. Out of the ten locations counted throughout the City, the Mount Vernon Trail section represented the largest number of pedestrians and bicyclists, 805 users over a two-hour count period. The trail is a major commuter route to and from Arlington and DC. Given the large number of users, widening the trail to a standard width is an important safety project.

This project is recommended to receive the City’s fourth priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

5. Old Town Transit Shop

Funding the operations of the City’s Old Town Transit Shop is a continuing priority of CMAQ and RSTP funds. This has occurred through the use of RSTP funds since the store opened in 2002, and will continue with CMAQ funds when the FY2012 allocation is used. These grants will keep the store in operation providing transit assistance and transit media.

The Old Town Transit Shop provides residents and employees a convenient “one stop” destination for all their commuting needs. Commuters are able to purchase fare media for almost every transit system in the area, pick up transportation information and schedules, and get answers to transportation related questions that they have. Most forms of transit fare media that the Transit Shop makes available to commuters saw increases in sales in recent years.

The Old Town Transit Shop is located directly across from the King Street Metro Station to serve commuters

This program is recommended to receive the City's fifth priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

6. Transit Analysis Study

It is necessary to periodically examine all transit services in the City. The City was able to do so in the Community-Wide Transit Analysis, which was completed at the end of 2010. By 2015, it will be necessary to do a similar study to determine the performance and needs of transit services at that time.

This project is recommended to receive the City's sixth priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

7. Transportation Demand Management Advancement

The City's Transportation Demand Management program is tasked with the goal of reducing the number of single person occupied vehicles (SOV's) during peak travel times. To do this, the program has developed an extensive set of techniques to convince City residents and City employees to use such modes as transit, carsharing, teleworking, and methods of ridesharing.

The City of Alexandria runs a comprehensive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program that uses a variety of tools and programs throughout the City. Recently, the City completed a Long Range TDM Plan outlining goals and strategies to enhance the City's TDM program. These TDM funds will help implement the recommendations of the Long Range TDM Plan and reduce congestion and improve air quality in the City and the region.

This program is recommended to receive the City's seventh priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

8. Braddock Road Metro Multimodal Connections

The Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan recommends studying the feasibility of building a tunnel connection under the freight rail tracks from the Braddock Road station itself. Such a tunnel would "provide a grand new station entry from the west, saving pedestrians walking time by eliminating the existing need to walk south to the Braddock Road underpass to reach the station" according to the Plan. In addition, the plan recommends studying a potential future pedestrian-bike connection and a potential walking route connection to the northern gateway.

This project would perform preliminary engineering to improve multimodal access and improve mobility options to the station.

This project is recommended to be the City's eighth highest priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

9. Parking Technologies

This study will fund the assessment of various techniques for managing parking better, and will fund the installation of such measures as multispace meters, real-time parking management, performance parking implementation, and pay-by-phone parking as a means of cutting emissions by eliminating excessive driving to find parking. In addition, these funds will be used to update the City's parking webpage and create mobile parking applications.

This project is recommended to receive the City's ninth priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.